



# DAILY BRIEFING

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Thursday, February 10, 2022

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## Join the NCHER Board of Directors and Play a Leadership Role in Higher Education Finance Policy, Run for Chair-Elect, Treasurer, or Director at-Large!

As NCHER continues to promote its advocacy, communications, and regulatory engagement agenda at the federal level, it is the time of the year to start preparing for upcoming elections for the NCHER Board of Directors. Have you thought about playing a leadership role at NCHER? Do you have ideas on improving membership services? Do you want to become more active on higher education policy at the federal level? Is your organization a voting member of NCHER? If so, consider submitting your name for Chair-Elect, Treasurer, or a seat on the Board of Directors.

Next month, NCHER will hold elections for the following positions:

- **Chair-Elect.** As an officer of NCHER, the Chair-Elect serves as vice chair of the Board of Directors, performing the duties and exercising the powers of the Chair in his/her absence or disability. The term begins on July 1, 2022, and includes the assumption of the duties as Chair on July 1, 2023, and as Immediate Past-Chair on July 1, 2024. This position and both subsequent positions serve on NCHER's Executive Committee.
- **Treasurer.** The Treasurer oversees the keeping of full and accurate accounts of the finances of the Council. The two-year term begins on July 1, 2022 and concludes on June 30, 2024. The position also serves as an officer, and on the NCHER Executive Committee.
- **Five Directors at-Large.** Board members are responsible for directing any and all activities and affairs of NCHER, including the organization's federal advocacy, communications, and research strategy. These two-year terms begin on July 1, 2022, and expire June 30, 2024.

In order to assist in the administration of the election, NCHER has formed a Nominating Committee which is composed of the Chair, Chair-Elect, and three of the most recent former Chairs who still remain active members, as prescribed by the NCHER By-Laws. The committee is responsible for soliciting recommendations from the voting membership and proposing a slate for election that will be mailed to each voting member by March 15, 2022. This notice is part of that solicitation as the committee works to ensure that the candidates for Chair-Elect and Directors at-Large are representative of the diversity of our organization.

If you would like to be considered for election or know someone who would be a great addition to the Board of Directors, email or call **Christiana Thornton** (New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation Network) **Scott D. Giles** (MOHELA), **Scott A. Giles** (Vermont Student Assistance Corporation), and/or **Ron Gambill** (ELFI) **before Friday, February 25, 2022.**

## Advocacy Groups Send Letter to Department of Education Pushing for IDR Reform

Yesterday, over 100 organizations, including the Student Borrower Protection Center, National Consumer Law Center, and the American Federation of Teachers, sent a [letter](#) to

U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona urging the U.S. Department of Education to create a limited waiver program for borrowers enrolled in income-driven repayment (IDR) plans. In the letter, the groups argue that IDR plans have failed to deliver on their promise of making student loan payments affordable, and the Biden Administration must take action to change the situation. The letter says that, out of the 4.4 million borrowers that have been in repayment on their federal student loans for 20 years or longer, only 32 IDR borrowers have managed to cancel their loans. The groups also touch on concerns that student loan debt disproportionately burdens Black borrowers. They recommend that the Department enact an IDR waiver system similar to the recent adoption of a waiver for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program waiver. The letter references an IDR waiver proposal published recently by the Center for Responsible Lending, the Student Borrower Protection Center, and the National Consumer Law Center, focused on: retroactively counting prior months of repayment toward forgiveness, providing relief automatically to student borrowers, and ensuring that all federal loan borrowers have access to the IDR waiver.

## House and Senate Democrats Introduce ACTION for National Service Act Aimed at Decreasing Student Debt

Rep. John Larson (D-CT) and Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI) recently introduced the America's Call to Improve Opportunities Now (ACTION) for National Service Act, which seeks to expand access to national service opportunities and lower student debt. According to the summary, the bill would provide an educational benefit equivalent to four years of average in-state tuition to young people who serve two full terms of service. The legislation stipulates that the educational benefits would be exempt from federal taxes. "ACTION for National Service will address the student debt crisis by increasing the education benefit participants receive for their service," Rep. Larson said in a [press release](#). "We need to make higher education more affordable, and this is one opportunity to do so." The bill is cosponsored by Sens. Chris Coons (D-DE), Sidney Blumenthal (D-CT), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) as well over 60 Democratic representatives.

## U.S. Department of Education News

For today's *Federal Register*, click [here](#).

The following announcement was posted to Federal Student Aid's Knowledge Center website:

- [\(GENERAL-22-07\) Washington's Birthday Federal Holiday Processing and Customer Service Hours](#)
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[Inside Higher Ed](#) reviews the negotiated rulemaking proposal on gainful employment that was recently released by the U.S. Department of Education. The proposal would return to a system of measuring earnings versus debt of graduates of instructional programs. But it would also require all institutions of higher education, including those that are not governed by gainful employment, to provide the agency with information on completion rates, debt, and other trends by program.

Third Way released a [report](#) examining what will happen if the U.S. Department of Education reinstates the gainful employment rule, which says that we will see an incredibly similar proportion of programs falling into the "pass," "warning," and "failing" designations today as under the 2014 rule, though there is some variation in the results by sector.

[Higher Ed Dive](#) highlights a new report from the Bipartisan Policy Center that found attending most higher education institutions tends to improve a student's lifetime earnings, but certain for-profit institutions and private nonprofit colleges and universities with programs shorter than two years are less likely to pay off.

[Saving for College](#) reviews and provides analysis of 529 college savings plans across the country each quarter and identifies the best performing 529 plans. Whether families are looking for the lowest-fee 529 plans, the top-rated plans, or plans with high returns, the 529 plan rankings are a great place to start.

[Fox News](#) publishes a column reporting on a University of Colorado Boulder campus survey where students weighed in on the Biden Administration's handling of student loan debt.

[Money](#) reports that Parent PLUS Loan borrowers are one of the fastest growing segments

of higher education borrowers and examines how parents may qualify for student loan forgiveness.

[Forbes](#) reports on what students need to know about medical school costs, pricing, and payment options.

[NPR - Podcast](#) discusses the President's campaign promise to cancel \$10,000 in federal student debt that has yet to happen.

[Business Insider](#) reports that colleges and universities are jacking up tuition, which could intensify the student loan debt crisis.

[Forbes](#) publishes a column on how students and their families can become financially "well."

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